



16612
28 February 1997

From: Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District
To: Distribution

Subj: VESSEL ANCHORING CAPABILITY

Ref: (a) D8m e-mail of 31 Dec 96
(b) Conference call of 27 Feb 97

1. The M/V BRIGHT FIELD casualty has focused our attention on the ability of vessels to let go anchors in an emergency. While 33 CFR 164.11(o) requires that anchors are "ready for letting go," this regulation has been widely interpreted by vessel masters. The emergency release of anchors can be a primary factor in preventing or mitigating a casualty resulting from a steering or main propulsion loss.

2. The enclosed statement, which was drafted by COTP New Orleans and modified by me after review by district legal, is a reminder to mariners of the anchoring regulation and provides a listing of operational requirements which must be met to comply. These operational requirements reflect the general intent of this regulation as outlined in its preamble (FR, Vol. 42, No. 20, Monday, January 31, 1977).

3. All COTPs who have vessels operating in their zones subject to 33 CFR 164 shall immediately consider application of some or all of the enclosed policy after assessing the situation in their respective ports. Also, additional requirements may be considered, or modifications made to the policy, again, depending on your particular port. Any COTP deciding not to implement this policy at all should contact me.

4. As with the bridge watch requirements, you have wide latitude in the application of this policy. If there are questions or concerns, contact me personally.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "J. W. Calhoun".
J. W. CALHOUN
By direction

Encl: (1) MSO New Orleans Anchoring Policy

Dist: All Eighth District MSOs and MSU

Copy: LANTAREA (Am)
CGD8(d1)

28 February 1997

From: Chief, Marine Safety Division

To: All Eighth District Gulf Region MSOs & MSU

1. This is the preamble. It was retyped because our fax from HQ was barely legible. The implication is the anchors must be ready for immediate letting go. While it states "walking out" is not required, if the anchors cannot be readily released when hauled, then they should be walked out.

Federal Register, Vol. 42, No. 20

Monday, January 31, 1977

Section 164.11(o). This was paragraph (r) in the proposal. It requires that the vessel's anchors be ready for letting go. Seven commenters suggested that application of the rule be limited to waters that are shallow enough for anchor use. Trying to narrowly define areas where the rule should apply would be impractical. The intent of the rule is that the anchor be ready for use if necessary, such as when a vessel sheers suddenly into an area where it may ground. Nor should the rule be limited to confined or congested waters, as three commenters suggested, for the same reason. Six persons asked what "ready for letting go" means. "Ready for letting go" means that stoppers, covers, jackasses, and similar items are removed from the ground tackle and that the chain be rigged for quick release. It does not mean that the anchor should be walked out.

CAPTAIN OF THE PORT NEW ORLEANS

VESSEL ANCHORING CAPABILITY

More than 300 vessels experienced power losses, irregularities or steering casualties while navigating the Captain of the Port New Orleans zone during 1995 and 1996. The standard and safe navigation practice, already followed by most vessels, is to set an anchor detail while the vessel is navigating in pilotage waters. The purpose of this notice is to remind mariners of federal safety requirements regarding vessel anchoring capabilities.

The Navigation Safety Regulations, Code of Federal Regulations Title 33, Subpart 164.11(o), require the owner, operator or person in charge of a vessel over 1600 gross tons to ensure that the anchors are immediately ready for letting go. In order to meet this requirement:

1. The vessel's foredeck shall be manned with sufficient, qualified personnel to quickly release and control both anchors, on command;
2. Effective communications shall be provided between the bridge and the foredeck;
3. Anchors, anchor tackle, anchor gear, and capstans shall be maintained such that both anchors are ready for quick release;
4. If anchors will not freefall from a position within the hawsepipe, then both anchors shall be walked out of the hawsepipe and maintained in a position ready for quick release;
5. Vessels conducting transits longer than eight hours in pilotage waters should schedule appropriate personnel reliefs.

33 CFR 164.11(o) was issued under the authority of the Ports and Waterways Safety Act, Title 33, Chapter 25, United States Code (42 Federal Register 5956, Jan 31, 1977). An owner, operator, or person in charge of a vessel that is required to set an anchor detail but fails to ensure that anchors are immediately ready for letting go is subject to a civil penalty of up to \$25,000. If that person knowingly and willingly violates this regulation, he or she is subject to a criminal class D felony conviction, including a fine of up to \$50,000 and 5 years confinement.

This requirement applies to vessels greater than 1600 gross tons navigating in the Captain of the Port New Orleans zone, operating in waters where a federal or state pilot is required. Questions concerning this requirement may be referred to the Port Operations Department, Marine Safety Office New Orleans. If any of the above conditions cannot be met, the vessel's master or agent shall immediately notify the Captain of the Port at Marine Safety Office New Orleans, (504) 589-6261.